

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 15 July 2024

Title: Communications Report

Contact Officer: Communications & Community Engagement Officer

Background

This report explains the current status of elements of Witney Town Council's Communication Strategy.

Current Situation

Website

Updating the Council's website is nearing completion in-house. The home page button should now take you to a related page (please report anything that doesn't end up where you think it ought. Sometimes (in the case of services and locating responsibilities) information is repeated e.g. the A-Z of services, so that you can quickly discern which council has responsibility for the issue being looked up. It is better to find that signpost in three places, rather than get frustrated looking for it.

Two hours a week is set aside for web work going forward. By next week this should be being used for maintenance and ensuring old pages and content are archived and no longer visible. Currently officers are prioritising the Lake and Country Park/Biodiversity page as the In Bloom Judges will be here next week and it would be good to have that all in place and the In Bloom portfolio uploaded there.

The Stronger Communities and Planning Administrator is now able to upload routine posts such as road closures and agendas.

Newsletter

The July newsletter is due out this week. The front page will focus on The Station, Witney Town Council's funded youth outreach work. Other content includes consultations for the Splash Park and the Deer Park MUGA and MUSA. Pages to advertise Corn Exchange events and the launch of the Youth Council are also included.

Litter & Dog Fouling Campaign – ‘Respect Your Streets’

Dog fouling is now mentioned on the large signage at each of the entrances to Tower Hill cemetery and Windrush. It forms part of the information on those signs. Standalone signage was deemed not suitable to place between graves.

While the issue of dog fouling is a serious one, people tend not to react favourably to censorious or critical signage, but councillors may wish to follow up the installation of the signage with further communications and messaging about respectful behaviour from dog owners while using the cemetery.

More generally, officers also plan a social media campaign over the summer months, starting during Love Your Parks Week from 24th July on both litter and dog fouling.

Consultations – Raleigh Crescent & Leys Splash Park

Consultation boards were taken to one of the stalls at the Carnival on Saturday 13th July. One of these was for the Splash Park. The design is very child friendly with bright images and simple stickers for children and parents to indicate their preferred choices.

The second focuses on ideas for a MUGA (Multi use games area) and a MUSA (multi use social area) for the Raleigh Crescent park at Deer Park) This aimed at collecting data from four age groups, using different colour stickers for each age group provide some sorted data. The groups are under 11, 12-19, 20-39 and over 40.

Witney Talking News

The Town Council has a long history of supporting this group; it has provided them with grants and for a time the news was recorded weekly in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. A member has recently been in touch to advise reader numbers are falling and asked if the Council can help raise awareness of the group. Officers have advised him to publicise it in care homes etc but do the Council agree for further promotion via social media etc?

<https://wtn.org.uk/>

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- There are no implications outside of existing budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

- That councillors consider if they would like further signage or communications around the issue of Dog Fouling.